

105TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. CON. RES. 114

Expressing the sense of the Congress concerning the worldwide trafficking of women and girls, whereby women and girls are coerced, abducted, or deceived into migrating within or across national borders, and particularly the trafficking of Burmese women and girls in Thailand for the purposes of forced prostitution.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 10, 1997

Ms. SLAUGHTER (for herself, Mr. YATES, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. PAYNE, Mr. UNDERWOOD, Mr. BROWN of California, Mr. MILLER of California, Ms. WATERS, Mr. McNULTY, Mr. PASTOR, and Ms. DANNER) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

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## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress concerning the worldwide trafficking of women and girls, whereby women and girls are coerced, abducted, or deceived into migrating within or across national borders, and particularly the trafficking of Burmese women and girls in Thailand for the purposes of forced prostitution.

Whereas the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in June 1996 declared, “Corruption and collusion, absence of and/or inadequate laws, lax law enforcement, and limited sensitization of law enforcement personnel to the harmful impact on children, are all

further factors which lead, directly or indirectly, to the commercial sexual exploitation of children.”;

Whereas the State Department’s 1996 annual Human Rights Report on Thailand states, “Incidents of coerced prostitution most commonly involve women who are not ethnic Thai . . .; the number of such women entering the country to work as prostitutes continued to rise. Because they cannot speak Thai, and are considered illegal immigrants, these women are particularly vulnerable to physical abuse, confinement, and exploitation. Some women are lured with promises of jobs as waitresses or domestic helpers, but are then forced to work as prostitutes.”;

Whereas the State Department’s report also states, “Credible nongovernmental organizations reported at year’s end (1996) that efforts by police to enforce the new antiprostitution law were only moderately successful in curbing the trade in children for commercial sex.”;

Whereas credible reports also indicate that members of the Thai police force are often actively involved in, and profit from, the trafficking of Burmese women and girls for the purposes of forced prostitution;

Whereas Article 1 of the 1956 Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery calls for the complete abolition or abandonment of debt bondage;

Whereas forced labor, defined under the 1930 Forced Labor Convention as “all work or service which is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered himself voluntarily”, is internationally prohibited;

Whereas the Convention of Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women requires all States Parties “to take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women”;

Whereas the trafficking of women and girls and forced prostitution are recognized as worldwide problems, and Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs John Shattuck has testified that the United States “urgently needs to encourage countries in which trafficking of women and children goes on with impunity to enact new laws, and to enforce existing laws. A particular target of this stepped up law enforcement should be government officials who participate in or condone trafficking, as well as brothel owners and traffickers”;

Whereas First Lady Hillary Clinton remarked in Thailand, “Expanding educational opportunities for children, curbing the spread of AIDS, and ending the exploitation of young girls in the commercial sex industry will not only help individual Thai girls and their families, but Thai society as a whole.”; and

Whereas Secretary Albright has remarked “[I]f those who traffic in drugs should be punished severely—and they should—so should those who traffic in human beings”:  
Now, therefore, be it

- 1        *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
- 2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of the Congress that—
- 3            (1) trafficking in persons violates the fun-
- 4            damental principles of human dignity, and forced
- 5            prostitution involving coercion or debt bondage con-

1       stitutes a form of forced labor and a slavery-like  
2       practice;

3           (2) the State Department or other appropriate  
4       Government agencies should investigate and take ap-  
5       propriate measures to combat trafficking of women  
6       and girls and forced prostitution in all countries  
7       where they are found;

8           (3) the State Department or other appropriate  
9       Government agencies should report to Congress an-  
10      nually on actions it has taken to combat the traffick-  
11      ing of women and girls and forced prostitution inter-  
12      nationally; the annual report should include an as-  
13      sessment of the extent of the problem and rec-  
14      ommendations for an appropriate international re-  
15      sponse;

16          (4) the World Congress on Commercial Sexual  
17      Exploitation of Children began important work on  
18      international child sexual exploitation, and the inter-  
19      national working group that was formed as a result  
20      of the Congress should continue its efforts to curb  
21      the sexual exploitation of children;

22          (5) the State Department should urge the Thai  
23      Government to strictly enforce the law criminalizing  
24      brothel operators, procurers, members of the Thai  
25      police force who may be complicit in forced prostitu-

1       tion, and customers of women and children traf-  
2       ficked for the purpose of forced prostitution;

3           (6) the State Department should ensure that  
4       Thai police participants in United States Govern-  
5       ment sponsored police training programs are system-  
6       atically vetted to exclude those who are implicated in  
7       trafficking and forced prostitution;

8           (7) the executive branch should take steps to  
9       assure that weapons and equipment provided or sold  
10      to the Thai police do not become available to mem-  
11      bers of those forces who might be involved in traf-  
12      ficking, forced prostitution, or abuse of women and  
13      girls who are apprehended;

14          (8) the State Department should urge the Thai  
15      Government to protect the rights and safety of Bur-  
16      mese women and girls in Thailand who are freed  
17      from brothels or who are arrested as illegal immi-  
18      grants because their status as trafficking victims is  
19      unclear;

20          (9) the State Department should encourage the  
21      Thai Government to continue to allow nongovern-  
22      mental organizations assisting in efforts to stop sex  
23      trafficking and assisting women and girls who have  
24      been victims of forced prostitution to proceed with  
25      their work unimpeded;

1           (10) the United States Agency for International  
2       Development should target a portion of its assist-  
3       ance to Thailand for AIDS prevention and control to  
4       the foreign population in Thailand, particularly Bur-  
5       mese women and girls in the Thai sex industry; and  
6           (11) the State Department should report to  
7       Congress, within 6 months of the date of the adop-  
8       tion of this resolution, on actions that it has taken  
9       to advocate that the Thai Government implement  
10      the above steps.

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